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UNCLAS MANILA 005987

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

STATE FOR EAP, EAP/MTS, EAP/MLS, AND L/EAP
USPACOM FOR WILLIAM ALDERSON
USPACOM ALSO FOR FPA HUSO
SECDEF/OSD/ISA/AP FOR ALLEN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [ASEC](#) [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [KCRM](#) [CASC](#) [RP](#)

SUBJECT: TWO MARINES EXIT THE PHILIPPINES

REF: MANILA 5966 AND PREVIOUS

¶1. (SBU) Corporal Corey Burris and Lance Corporal Albert Lara departed the Philippines via US military aircraft at 4:40 p.m. local time on December 28, following the dismissal by the Olongapo City prosecutor the previous day of the complaint against them in the case of the alleged November 1 rape of a Filipina on the grounds of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (ref A). The other four Marines charged in the case remain in US custody.

¶2. (SBU) Burris and Lara left without incident, using normal procedures for departing US military personnel. Acting Deputy Chief of Mission informed Department of Foreign Affairs US Division Director Maria Josefina Ceballos and the Visiting Forces Agreement Commission (VFACOM) staff of this departure, asking that the VFACOM inform members of the VFA Oversight Committee in the Philippine Senate and House. Ceballos asked if Embassy planned to inform DFA of this development in writing; A/DCM informed her that Embassy had no plans to do such unless the DFA requested such a communication.

¶3. (SBU) Charge d'Affaires Jones, who is hosting the Embassy's annual holiday reception in Baguio on December 28, will inform President Arroyo, who is expected to attend.

¶4. (SBU) Embassy does not plan to issue a statement, but will be ready to confirm in response to media inquiries that the two returned to their unit in Okinawa, without commenting on the details of their departure or future plans. Embassy's Public Affairs Section will coordinate suggested updates to the EAP December 27 press guidance with EAP.

¶5. (SBU) Action request: Please advise if Department believes we need to close the loop on Burris and Lara with a diplomatic note; if so, please provide appropriate language.

Visit Embassy Manila's Classified website:
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eap/manila/index.cfm>
Jones